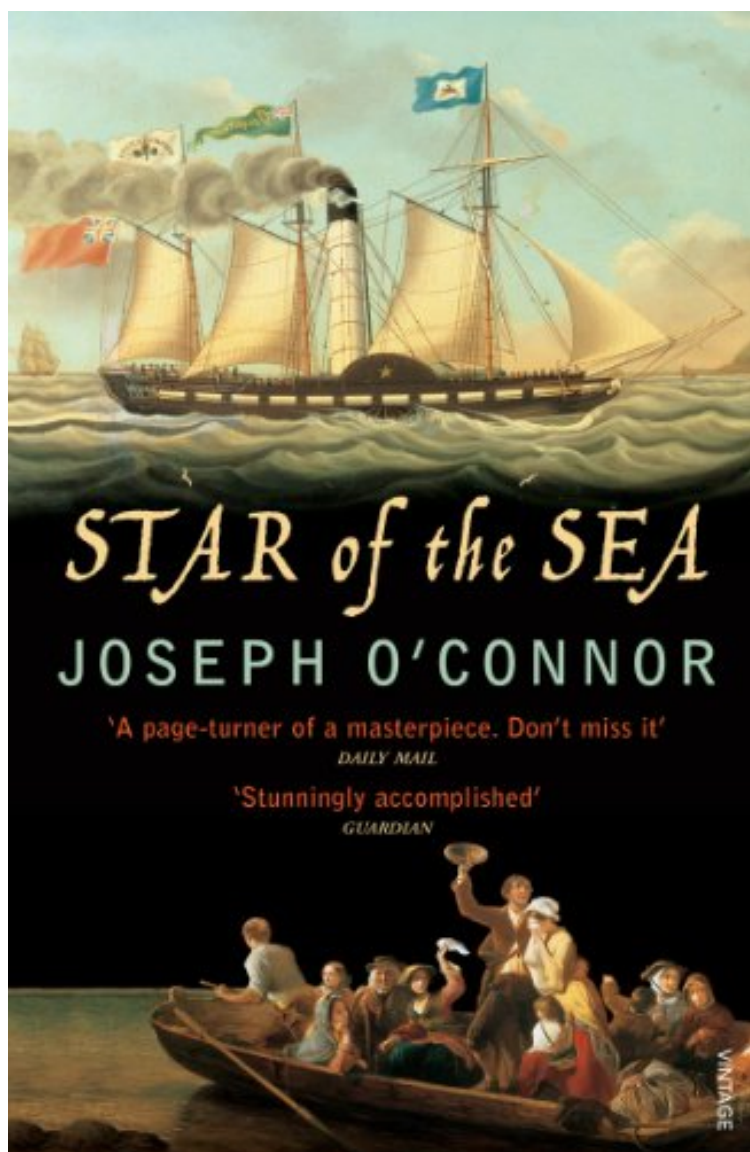


[Read free] File size: 56.Mb

The Star Of The Sea



Par Joseph O'Connor
ebooks | Download PDF | *ePub |
DOC | audiobook

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les
ventes : #179357 dans eBooksPubli le:
2011-01-11Sorti le: 2011-01-
11Format: Ebook Kindle

[Read free] The Star Of The Sea

Par Joseph O'Connor : The Star Of
The Sea before purchasing it in order to
gauge whether or not it would be worth my
time, and all praised The Star Of The Sea:

Download

Read Online

Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurIn the bitter winter of 1847, The Star of the Sea sets sail from Ireland for New York. Amongst the passengers are a maidservant with a devastating secret, bankrupt Lord Merridith and his family, an aspiring novelist and a maker of revolutionary ballads. All in search of a new home in the Promised land, each is yet connected more deeply than they can possibly know... and a camouflaged killer is stalking the decks, hungry for vengeance and absolution.ExtraitCHAPTER I ITHE VICTIMTHE SECOND EVENING OF THE VOYAGE:IN WHICH A CERTAIN IMPORTANT PASSENGER ISINTRODUCED TO THE READER.1249W; 5111N.- 8. 15 P. M. -The Right Honourable Thomas David Nelson Merridith, the noble Lord Kingscourt, the Viscount of Roundstone, the ninth Earl of Cashel, Kilkerrin and Carna, entered the

Dining Saloon to an explosion of smashing glass. A steward, a Negro, had stumbled near the doorway, bucked by a sudden roll of the vessel, letting slip an overloaded salver of charged champagne flutes. Someone was performing an ironic slow-handclap at the fallen mans expense. An inebriated mocking cheer came from the farthest corner: Huazzah! Bravo! Well done, that fellow! Another voice called: Theyll have to put up the fares! The steward was on his knees now, trying to clear the debris. Blood was rivuleting down his slender left wrist, staining the cuff of his brocaded jacket. In his anxiety to collect the shards of shattered crystal he had sliced open his thumb from ball to tip. Mind your hand, Lord Kingscourt said. Here. He offered the steward a clean linen handkerchief. The man looked up with an expression of dread. His mouth began to work but no sound came. The Chief Steward had hustled over and was barking at his subordinate in a language Merridith did not understand. Was it German, perhaps? Portuguese? Saliva flew from his mouth as he hissed and cursed the man, who was now cowering on the carpet like a beaten child, his uniform besmirched with blood and champagne, a grotesque parody of commodores whites. David? called Merridiths wife. He turned to look. She had half risen from her banquette at the Captains table and was gaily beckoning him over with a bread-knife, her knotted eyebrows and pinched lips set in a burlesque of impatience. The people around her were laughing madly, all except the Maharajah, who never laughed. When Merridith glanced back towards the steward again, he was being chivvied from the saloon by his furious superior, the latter still bawling in the guttural language, the transgressor cradling his hand to his breast like a wounded bird. Lord Kingscourts palate tasted acridly of salt. His head hurt and his vision was cloudy. For several weeks he had been suffering some kind of urinary infection and since boarding the ship at Kingstown, it had worsened significantly. This morning it had pained him to pass water; a scalding burn that had made him cry out. He wished hed seen a doctor before embarking on the voyage. Nothing for it now but to wait for New York. Couldnt be frank with that drunken idiot Mangan. Maybe four weeks. Hope and pray. Surgeon Mangan, a morose old bore by day, was already pink in the face from drinking, his greasy hair gleaming like a polished strap. His sister, who looked like a caricature of a cardinal, was systematically breaking the petals off a pale yellow rose. For a moment Lord Kingscourt wondered if she was going to eat them; but instead she dropped them one by one into her tumbler of water. Watching them with a sullen undergraduate expression sat the Louisiana columnist, Grantley Dixon, in a dinner jacket he had clearly borrowed from someone larger and which gave his shoulders a boxy look. Merridith disliked him and always had, since being forced to endure his socialistic prattle at one of Lauras infernal literary evenings in London. The novelists and poets were tolerable in their way, but the aspiring novelists and poets were simply insufferable. A clown, Grantley Dixon, a perfervid parrot, with his militant slogans and second-hand attitudes: like all coffee-house radicals a screaming snob at heart. As for his imperious guff about the novel he was writing, Merridith knew a dilettante when he saw one, and he was looking at one now. When hed heard Grantley Dixon was going to be on the same ship, he had almost wanted to postpone the journey. But Laura had told him he was being ridiculous. He could always count on Laura to tell him that. What a collection to have to abide over dinner. A favourite expression of his fathers came into Merridiths mind. Too much for the white man to be asked to bear. Are you quite all right, dear? Laura asked. She enjoyed the role of the concerned wife, particularly when she had an audience to appreciate her concern. He didnt mind. It made her happy. Sometimes it even made him happy too. You look as if youre in pain. Or discomfort of some kind. Im fine, he said, easing into his seat. Just famished. Amen to that, said Surgeon Mangan. Excuse my lateness, Lord Kingscourt said. There are two little chaps I know who insist on being told bedtime stories. The Mail Agent, a father, gave a strange, baleful smile. Merridiths wife rolled her eyes like a doll. Our girl Mary is ill again, she said. Mary Duane was their nanny, a native from Carna in County Galway. David Merridith had known her all his life. I dont know whats come over that girl, Lady Kingscourt continued. Shes barely left her cabin since the moment we boarded. When usually shes hale as a Connemara pony. And quite as bloody-minded as one too. She held up her fork and gazed at it closely, for some reason gently pricking her fingertips with the ends of the tines. Perhaps she is homesick, Lord Kingscourt said. His wife laughed briefly. I hardly think so. I notice some of the sailorboys giving her the glad eye, said the Surgeon affably. Pretty little thing if she didnt wear so much black. She was bereaved of her husband not too long ago, said Merridith. So she probably shant notice the sailorboys I should think. Oh dear, oh dear. Hard thing at her age. Quite. Wine was poured. Bread was offered. A steward brought a tureen and began to serve the vichyssoise. Lord Kingscourt was finding it difficult to concentrate. A worm of pain corkscrewed slowly through his groin: a stone-blind maggot of piercing venom. He could feel his shirt sticking to his shoulders and abdomen. The Dining Saloon had an ashy, stagnant atmosphere, as though pumped dry of air and filled up with pulverised lead. Against

the cloying odour of meat and over-bloomed lilies another more evil stench was trying to gain. What in the name of Christ was that filthy smell? The Surgeon had clearly been in the middle of one of his interminable stories when Merridith had arrived. He resumed telling it now, chuckling expansively, enfeebled by duckish clucks of self-amusement as he gaped around at the dutifully simpering company. Something about a pig who could talk. Or dance? Or stand on its hind legs and sing Tom Moore. It was an Irish peasant story anyway: all of the Surgeons were. Gintilmin. Sorr. Jayzus be savin Yer Worship. He tugged his invisible forelock and puffed out his cheeks, so juicily proud of his facility for imitation. It was something Merridith found hard to stomach, the way the prosperous Irish were never done lampooning their rural countrymen: a sign, they often claimed, of their own maturity on matters national, but in truth just another form of cringing obsequiousness. Will you tell me now, the Surgeon chortled, his bright eyes streaming with excess of mirth, where else could that happen but darlin auld Oirland? He spoke the last three words as though in inverted commas. Wonderful people, agreed the heavily perspiring Mail Agent. A marvellous logic all their own. The Maharajah said nothing for a few long moments, grim-faced and bored in his stiff robes. Then he muttered a few gloomy syllables and snapped his fingers to his personal butler who was standing like a Guardian Angel a few feet behind him. The butler brought over a small silver box, which the Maharajah reverently opened. Out of it he took a pair of spectacles. He looked at them for a moment, as though surprised to have found them there. Cleaned them with a napkin and put them on. You'll remain at New York for some time, Lord Kingscourt? It took a moment for Merridith to realise whom the Captain was addressing. Indeed, he said. I mean to go into business, Lockwood. Inevitably Dixon gave him a look. Since when did the gentry stoop to working for a living? There's a famine in progress in Ireland, Dixon. I assume you stumbled across it on your visit there, did you? The Captain gave an apprehensive laugh. I'm sure our American friend meant no offence, Lord Kingscourt. He only thought I'm quite aware of what he thought. How can an Earl be fallen low as a tradesman? In a way my dear wife often thinks the same thing. He looked across the table at her. Don't you, Laura? Lady Kingscourt said nothing. Her husband went back to his soup. He wanted to eat it before it coagulated. Yes. So you see my predicament, Dixon. Not a man on my estate has paid rent for four years. My father's death leaves me with half of all the bogland in southern Connemara, a great deal of stones and bad turf, a greater deal of overdue accounts and unpaid wages. Not to mention the considerable duties owing to the government. He broke a piece of bread and took a sip of wine. Dying is rather expensive, he smiled darkly at the Captain. Unlike this claret. Which is muck. Lockwood glanced uneasily around the table. He wasn't #8... Revue de presse PRAISE FOR STAR OF THE SEA A brave and artful novel. THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW In Star of the Sea, O'Connor has written not only an epic novel, but also a very important one. By deconstructing the most defining moment of Irish history, and breaking down its essential components, he has given a face and a voice to the million who died. IRISH ECHO Along the way O'Connor even brings in a thoroughly gripping murder mystery that is all the more affecting for the depth he gives his characters. They add up to a powerfully symbolic microcosm of the time. Bottom Line: Shining Star. PEOPLE